

So really there is no one who has had a broader and better experience in National Government than Dick Cheney. Perhaps even more important than that, this is a person who is a real person. I am sure all of us get a little exasperated from time to time in politics, where it seems almost everything is spinning the issue, particularly in election times. You hear things. Someone asks a question and the question is never answered because they spin off into something that is entirely different to be advantageous to themselves. Not Dick Cheney. Dick Cheney is a guy who is real. He is a guy just like the rest of us. He grew up in Caspar, WY; went to school there. So all of us, including the Presiding Officer here, from Wyoming, are very proud of Dick Cheney and very pleased that he will be a part of this campaign, hopefully of governance in this country.

Finally, for a couple of seconds I would like to say how disappointed I am that we are not moving forward, doing the business of the people of this country. We are down to where there are 4 days left this week, less than that, actually—a week when we had hoped to do, probably, three appropriations bills. We go out, then, in August for recess, come back in September, probably have less than 20 working days to accomplish the business of this country.

Whether you like it or not, one of the major features of the Government is the appropriations process. It is determining what money is spent for, what programs are given priorities. Of course, that is what the appropriations process is all about. We are talking about \$1.8 trillion, almost \$700 billion of that being in appropriated funds. So our responsibility is to do that. Now we find ourselves being held up from going forward. I understand there are differences of opinion. That is what this is all about. There are supposed to be differences of opinion. But there is also a way to deal with those without holding up the progress of the entire Congress and ignoring the things we are designed to do, often simply to make an issue.

We find ourselves, unfortunately, in Presidential years more interested in creating issues than we are in creating solutions. I think that is too bad. Obviously, issues are important. Obviously, differences of view are important. Obviously, there is generally a considerable amount of difference between the views on the other side of the aisle, the minority, and the majority. The minority, of course, is generally for spending more money, having more Government. They see the role of the Federal Government expanded greatly, where most of us on this side are more interested in holding down the size of government, moving government closer to the people and the States and in the counties and that sort of activity.

It is discouraging when they use that leverage of basically shutting down the

things we must do. Unfortunately, there is a history of that. In 1998, in the second session, the minority held up the education savings account, the protection of private property rights, product liability reform, NATO expansion, the Human Cloning Prohibition Act, funding for the Treasury Department—all in the effort to use that leverage.

Last year, of course, we had the obstruction of the Social Security lockbox—six times. We would go back to the same six times to make an issue out of it. Ed-Flex, the idea of giving more flexibility to education and letting people on the ground, in the States and on the school boards, have more determination as to what was done there, and bankruptcy reform—still in limbo.

We had delay in such critical issues as the elementary-secondary education bill. That is something that ought to be moved. Marriage penalty tax relief—it took a very long time. You can make decisions on things, but to try to change it by avoiding moving forward is a very destructive kind of operation. That is where we find ourselves right now, unfortunately.

The Ed-Flex bill, as I said, had to have five votes before we could break that. The lockbox legislation to protect Social Security, we went over and over that.

Much of it is the idea somehow if we can put everything off until after the first of the year, there will perhaps be another opportunity to do something different.

I think it is time for us to adjourn. I yield the floor.

Mr. DORGAN. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. President?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will state it.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I am wondering, the Senate reconvenes at 2 o'clock by previous order today, is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. At the hour of 2:15.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I shall not ask to extend morning business. But I ask consent I be recognized at 2:15 for 20 minutes of morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will stand in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, at 12:31 p.m., the Senate recessed until 2:15 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BROWNBACK).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In my capacity as a Senator from the State of Kansas, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period for morning business until the hour of 3 p.m., with the time equally divided in the usual form.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, by previous order, I am recognized for the next 20 minutes. The Senator from Idaho wishes to deal with the 20 minutes following that; is that correct?

Mr. CRAIG. Yes. The Senator from Idaho asks unanimous consent that the unanimous consent request he just made become active immediately following the time of the Senator from North Dakota.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the Senator from North Dakota has the next 20 minutes. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS ON SENATE AGENDA

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I was listening to some of the discussion this morning before the Senate broke for the party lunches. I was especially interested in a couple of presentations about the progress some think the Senate has made in this Congress, and about why they believe the Senate is not making progress today or this week.

It reminds me of the story of the fly that landed on the nose of an ox. The ox, with the fly on its nose, went out for the entire day and plowed in the field. They came back to the village at night, and the villagers began applauding. The fly, still on the nose of the ox, took a deep bow and said to the villagers: We've been plowing.

That is sort of what I heard this morning—we've been plowing—when, in fact, this Senate, as all of us know, has not done the work we should have been doing for the American people.

I thought it would be interesting to describe what the agenda should have been and what we have done.

I will talk about some of the issues with which most Americans believe the Congress should be dealing: Common sense gun safety. For those who might be listening, I'm not talking about gun control; this is not in any way going to abridge people's Second Amendment right to own guns. This legislation will, however, close a loophole in the law that allows people to purchase guns at gun shows without having to get an instant check.

If you buy a gun in this country in a gun store, you must have your name run through an instant check system